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SHAKSPEARE IN HIS WORKS.

AMONG the many authors who have written lives of Shakspeare, it has been a common topic of regret and surprise that the ascertainable facts respecting so famous a man should be so few; so that they are compelled (in order to make a biography of the length befitting the dignity of the subject) to eke out the scanty record of what he did by telling us what he might have done, describing the places he might have seen, and the people he might have known. With the exception, indeed, of the dates derived from the parish register, almost all our authentic information comes from the records of the borough of Stratford, and the facts there recorded are, of course, of the most prosaic and common-place kind. The traditions gathered by the gossiping and uncritical Aubrey, or mentioned by Rowe, cannot be depended upon as containing even a germ of fact, being, moreover, for the most part exceedingly unimportant; and it is impossible to derive from his own works any certain inferences as to the circumstances and events of his life.

He was, in truth, of all poets the least autobiographical. His very greatness prevented him being so. He threw himself so completely into the dramatic situations which he was imagining and embodying for the time being, that he ceased to be William Shakspeare, and became Hamlet, or Coriolanus, or Prospero. Only in very few passages does there seem to be a faint trace of personal feeling or a faint record of personal experience; such, for instance, is that passage in *Twelfth Night* (ii. 4):

Let still the woman take
An elder than herself; so wears she to him,
So sways she level in her husband's heart:

where we cannot be wrong in supposing that he must have bethought him how he at eighteen had taken to wife Anne Hathaway, aged twenty-six. But such a case is rare, if not unique. While he was creating, he ceased to be man, and was poet all over. Such a power of perfect self-abandonment

and self-forgetfulness seems to be essential to, and characteristic of, the highest genius.

Shakspeare's Sonnets stand by themselves apart. They are professedly autobiographical, and ostensibly a revelation of his own personal feelings. But, strange to say, these give us less insight into the real man than do the plays. There is, with all their beauty and tenderness, an air of unreality about them. They are written, we feel, to suit a fantastic ideal, which, culminating in Italy under the lead of Petrarch, had for two centuries been the fashion in civilised Europe. It is impossible to believe that Shakspeare, who in all his other works appears before us as an eminently healthy-minded man, should have been really racked and tormented by the morbid jealousies and fancies which disturbed the course of his passionate friendship for 'Mr W. H.' The whole thing must be a mere effort of invention. According to the model of Petrarch, he was the best of sonneteers who could turn and twist the same theme through the greatest number of ingenious transformations. The poet is shewing here his dexterity, and skill, and wit, but not his heart. The heart, we may be sure, was with his children at Stratford, and probably with his elderly wife too. The fact that so little has been recorded of Shakspeare, tends to shew that in his life scandal found nothing to lay hold of. The story of his poaching in Charlecote Park is probably untrue; but even if true, all that would be proved is this, that his after-life must have been blameless indeed, since it afforded, to the ill-natured gossip of a country town, nothing worse to dwell upon than a youthful frolic. As far as we can judge, he had not the tastes of a sportsman. With that marvellous facility of his, which we have already mentioned as the chief quality of a poet, especially a dramatic poet, he could sympathise with persons of tastes, tempers, and pursuits utterly differing from his own. His rapid apprehension and excellent memory enabled him to use with precision the slang of the idle soldier or dissolute man of pleasure, as well as the technical terms of every profession. Lord Campbell wrote a pamphlet to prove, from the accuracy with which he uses legal

phraseology, that he must have been at one time a lawyer's clerk. By parity of reasoning, it might be shewn that he must have been a surgeon's apprentice, or a schoolmaster, or a farmer, or a merchant.

But it would be ungracious to find fault either with those who amuse themselves with ingenious defences of hypotheses incapable of proof, or with those who seriously endeavour by bold conjecture to fill out the few bare facts, and to fill up the great gaps which lie between them. All this apparently resultless labour springs at least from a love of the man, and from an earnest longing to get closer to him and know him *intus et in cute*. One can easily forgive, and even sympathise with men who stretch their arms out towards the irrecoverable past over that dark deep silent gulf which is widening year by year. The stretched-out hands clutch only the air, and come back empty, and in the heart there grows up a divine despair, which seems to be a loss, but is a gain, inasmuch as it is one of the poet's gifts, and if it does not of itself make a man a poet, at least tends to bring him nearer in spirit to the greatest minds among the great dead, of whom beyond all question the greatest is Shakspeare.

If his contemporaries could have foreseen to what a height his fame was destined to grow, how every scrap of his writing would have been cherished, how his lightest words would have been remembered and recorded! As it is, we have (except the bare signature) not one word of authentic manuscript, nor one authentic saying (unless it be the humble joke about Ben Jonson's 'translation of the latten spoons'). Not, however, that Shakspeare was depreciated in his own day, as most people believe, on the authority of Wordsworth. The latter poet, feeling that his own merits were not duly recognised in his lifetime, consoled himself with the thought that such was the lot of all great poets, Shakspeare among the rest. But the facts do not bear out this view. Shakspeare, long before his death, was, without doubt, the most popular man of letters that England had ever seen. People were never weary of going to see his plays, some of which went through four or even five quarto editions during his lifetime alone—an immense success, when the reading public was comparatively so limited a body. No poet before him, or since, down to the days of Scott and Byron, ever realised so large a fortune. No doubt his relative fame is much higher now than it was then. Time has dwarfed the minor reputations which then surrounded his, and left Shakspeare alone untouched. In the valley of le Puy-de-Dôme, close to the town, there is an isolated column of basalt. Once on a time, as the geologists tell us, the whole valley was filled with earth to the height of the top of this column; but the slow action of rain and stream, during many ages, has swept away the softer material, and left the basalt still in its place. Shakspeare seems to me like that column. He is the basalt, his rivals are the common earth, and the stream is Time.

What his reputation was a few years after his death, the noble and generous lines by Ben Jonson,

prefixed to the folio edition, abundantly testify—lines in which only unreasoning idolatry of Shakspeare could find a trace of jealousy or envy. Both Jonson and Milton have admirably described the excellences of Shakspeare, with a frank large-minded appreciation, such as became men, themselves great poets, and with a fulness of praise such as became the greater poet whom they took for their theme.

It always seems to me that Shakspeare was more truly appreciated in former days, when his defects were acknowledged, than he has been since Schlegel and Coleridge taught that he had none. I believe that Pope and Theobald, Dr Johnson and Capell, with all their defects as editors, took a truer measure of their author, and understood him better than the modern Germans, who never mention any of them without expressions of contempt and scorn. Successive critics in that Paradise of critics take Shakspeare for their subject: each has his own theory as to the 'ground-idea' of this play and that play, this or that trilogy (save the mark!); each new theory is incompatible with its predecessor, and its propounder equally dogmatic. If Shakspeare could read Ulrici's criticisms, how astonished he would be to find what philosophical subtleties he had been unconsciously expounding and developing! The truth is, that in working for the stage, Shakspeare's first object was to make a living, not to make a name, and still less expound philosophical truths. He bids his friend, in the Sonnets, chide with Fortune,

That did not better for my life provide,
Than public means, which public manners breeds:
Thence comes it that my name receives a brand,
And almost thence my nature is subdued
To what it works in, like the dyer's hand.

Several of the plays, we know, and probably more than we know of, which now go under his name, were old plays touched up by him. Over these he scattered, with a lavish and careless hand, the graces of his unflinching variety and abounding fancy; but he did not dream (at least in the earlier part of his career) that these plays would survive him and be linked with his fame. He took, so far as we know, no care about their publication, and let any publisher who pleased print them from any uncorrected manuscript he could lay hold of. In many cases, he evidently worked in hot haste, to be ready against a certain time. Incongruities and errors of all sorts (many due clearly to the writer, not to the printer) abound in his plays, especially the earlier ones. As he went on, he came gradually to see that the theatre was to be his life-calling, and that on his dramas, not on *Venus and Adonis*, or *Lucrece*, or any other poem which he might have planned, his fame would rest. When he had time to take pains, how exquisite is the workmanship! What delicacy of touch, marvellous in union with such gigantic strength! The secret of his power over us in these, his greater and later works, seems to be the combination of this perfect style—perfect in its blending of grandeur and 'finish'—with entire forgetfulness of self, inexhaustible variety of thought, richness of illustration, and a tact which scarcely ever fails. Above all, he believed in his own creations with all his heart, threw all his power into their development, and throughout makes us feel that though he loves his art much, and makes sacrifices to what he conceives it to

require of him, he yet loves truth and honour above all, and that the great dramatist is also a great and good man.

W. G. C.

LOST SIR MASSINGBERD.

CHAPTER XXVI.—A DETECTIVE OF HALF A CENTURY AGO.

MR GERARD had hardly finished speaking, when the butler announced Mr Clint and 'another gentleman,' for even among friends the famous Bow Street officer exercised his usual caution; and yet there was scarcely a more public character than Townshend, or better known both to the classes whom he protected, and to that against which he waged such constant war. His personal appearance was itself sufficiently remarkable. A short squab man, in a light wig, kerseymere breeches, and a blue Quaker-cut coat, he was not, to look at, a very formidable object. But he possessed the courage of a lion, and the cunning of a fox. The ruffians who kept society in terror, themselves quailed before him. They knew that he was hard to kill, and valued not his own life one rush, when duty called upon him to hazard it; that he was faithful as a watch-dog to the government which employed him, and hated by nature a transgressor of the law, as a watch-dog hates a wolf. When Townshend fairly settled himself down upon the track of an offender, the poor wretch felt like the hare whose fleeing footsteps the stoat relentlessly pursues; he might escape for the day, or even the morrow, but sooner or later, his untiring foe was certain to be up with him. In those early days, when the telegraph could not overtake the murderer speeding for his life, and set Justice upon her guard five hundred miles away, to intercept him, and when the sun was not the slave of the Law, to photograph the features of the doomed criminal, so that he can be recognised as easily as Cain, thief-catching was a much more protracted business than it is now; nevertheless, it was at least as certain.

If the facilities for capture were not so great, neither were the opportunities of escape for the offender so many and various. London was not the labyrinth that it has since become, and if any criminal of note forsook it for the provinces, his fate was almost certain. Travellers did not then rush hither and thither, in throngs of a hundred strong, impossible to be individually identified by the railway porter to whom they surrender their tickets; but each man was entered in a way-bill, or scanned with curiosity by innkeeper and post-boy, wherever his chaise changed horses. When any considerable sum was sent by mail-coach, whether by the government or by London bankers, to their provincial agents, it was not unusual to employ Mr Townshend as an escort. Nor was it altogether unexampled for him to be sent for, as in the present instance, to unravel some domestic mystery; although he was perhaps the first police-officer who had been so employed, the father of all the Fields and Pollaxies of the present day. He was on intimate terms, therefore, with many great people, and an especial favourite with the court, his professional services being engaged at all drawing-rooms and state occasions. This, combined with the natural assurance and sense of power in the man, caused Mr Townshend to hold his head

pretty high, and to treat with persons vastly superior in social station to himself upon at least an equal footing. His easy nod, with which the great Bow Street Runner favoured us in Harley Street that evening upon his first introduction, was not very much unlike the salutation which Mr Brummel, at the same period, was wont to bestow upon British marquises and dukes. Having taken his seat at the dessert-table, at the host's desire, he at once began to compliment Mr Gerard upon the contents of the bottle with the yellow seal, and, in short, behaved himself in all respects as any other guest would have done who was an intimate friend of the family, and had dropped in after dinner upon his own invitation. No sooner, however, did Mr Clint introduce the subject which had called us up to town, and Mr Long begin to recapitulate the story of Sir Massingberd's disappearance, than this singular person dropped at once all social pretension, and shewed himself the really great man he was. One glass of wine was sufficient for him during the whole narration, and that he seemed to sip mechanically, and rather as an assistance to thought, than because he really enjoyed it, which, however, there is no doubt he did. He only interrupted my tutor twice or thrice, in order to make some pertinent interrogation, and when all had been described (including a slight sketch of Marmaduke's position), he sat for a little silent and noiseless, tapping his wine-glass with his forefinger, and staring into the fire.

'Well, Mr Townshend, and what is your opinion?' inquired Mr Gerard a little impatiently. 'Do you think that this lost Sir Massingberd is alive or dead?'

'That is a question which a fool would answer at once, sir, but a wise man would take some time to reply to,' returned the Bow Street Runner coolly. 'But one thing you may depend upon, that he will not be "Lost" long. I have blotted that word out of my dictionary. I know Sir Massingberd Heath well, or, at least, I did know him, and that is a great advantage to start with: he was not a man, I should think, to change with age. Tall figure and strong; large piercing eyes; much beard; a mouth that tells he likes to have his own way; and on his forehead a mark as if the devil had kicked him.'

'That is excellent,' cried Mr Gerard: 'you could not mistake him for any other man in London.'

'He is *not* in London, sir,' observed the runner dogmatically. 'If he were mixing with the lot that he used to be amongst, I should surely have heard of it; and if he is with people much beneath him in station, I should have learned it still more certainly. As for that, however, he is not one—if I remember him right—to hide himself, or work much underground.'

'If you mean that he would not stoop to deception, Mr Townshend,' remarked my tutor gravely, 'I am afraid you are mistaken; the very money which, as I have said, he obtained from me upon the day of his disappearance, was dishonourably come by. His pretext of the Methodists having bidden for a piece of ground, upon which to build a chapel within the Park, and almost opposite the Rectory, was, I have since discovered, entirely false; and I cannot but fear that some judgment has overtaken this unhappy man.'

Here, I am sorry to say, that Mr Clint and Mr Gerard looked at one another in rather a comic

manner, and the Bow Street Runner helped himself to a glass of the particular with an open chuckle.

'Well, sir,' responded that gentleman, 'you see Judgments isn't much in my way. When I catches a chap, he generally knows its judgment and execution too; but barring that, I doubt whether there is much of a special Providence for rascals—even when they rob a church minister. Not, of course, that I am saying Sir Massingberd Heath, baronet, is a rascal, or anything like it; I never had anything to do with him in all my life before this, and that's a good sign, look you. When I said he was not a man to work underground, however, I did not mean that he would not employ every ingenious device—and the one you mention was one of the neatest I ever heard on—to procure money, but that he is of too domineering and masterful a nature to lurk and spy about. The young gentleman here need not be in much alarm, I think, of his relative's turning up in Harley Street; notwithstanding which, he is a very ticklish customer, no doubt, and one as I should not have been in the least surprised to find myself under orders to fit with a pair of bracelets, for such a thing, for instance, as Murder.'

I think each of us started and looked at one another in hushed amazement at this statement; and the wine-glass which Marmaduke was twisting nervously in his fingers rattled against the table in spite of his efforts to remain calm.

'I mean,' observed Mr Townshend in explanation, 'as the baronet, when I knew him at least, was venomous, yet likewise hasty; and though cunning enough, if his temper got the better of him, would do imprudent things. I remember him well-nigh killing his jockey on the course at Doncaster—it was the second year as ever the Leger was run for—and all for no fault of his, but just because he didn't win when his master expected it. I remember how the crowd hissed the gentleman, and the ugly look which he gave them in reply. There was no fuss made about the matter afterwards; but Sir Massingberd had to supply a deal of Golden Ointment to the poor lad's bruises: he was very free-handed with his money at that time. I suppose, by the pace he was then going, that he has not much left.'

'He has almost literally not a shilling,' replied Mr Long. 'I am quite certain that he had no ready money in his possession, besides the twenty one-pound notes which he obtained from me upon that evening.'

'And no means of raising any?' inquired Mr Townshend.

'None whatever,' replied my tutor positively.

'That simplifies the business a good deal,' remarked the Bow Street Runner, drawing out his pocket-book. 'Now, I suppose you kept the numbers of those notes?'

'Yes, I did. Peter, did you not write them down for me?'

'The notes ran from 82961 to 82980 inclusive,' said I.

'A very concise and sensible statement, young gentleman,'* remarked the police-officer approvingly; 'I should like, however, to see the figures in black and white.' When these had been found

* Every lad in my position, not yet turned twenty-one, was a 'young gentleman' in these times; we were not so tenacious of our dignity as the young men of to-day.

among certain memorandums of my tutor, Mr Townshend copied them, and thus continued: 'Now, the first thing as has to be done, gentlemen all—by which no offence is meant to the young lady—is this: we must go to the Bank of England, and find out if any of these here notes have been paid in since November 16th. If they have been, one of two things is certain: Sir Massingberd is spending them, or somebody else is spending them for him. If the latter, it is probable that it is not with his consent; that is, that he can't help it; that is, that he's dead as a tenpenny-nail; and with that the speaker brought down his fist upon the mahogany, as though he were hammering one in.

'We shall leave the case, Mr Townshend, entirely in your hands,' observed Mr Gerard; 'and please to look to me for any expenses you may require.'

'Very good, sir,' replied the runner, rising as if to take his leave; 'but since two or three heads are always better than one, in cases of this sort, and the present company has their wits about them—which is by no means the case with many as I have to do with—I should be glad of a little assistance from yourselves.'

'Don't you think we ought to advertise the baronet as Missing, and offer a reward?' suggested Mr Clint.

'There will be no harm in that, of course,' replied Mr Townshend carelessly; 'although I can't say as I have much confidence in advertisements; my own experience is, that parties who put them in derive some satisfaction from reading them over to themselves, but the advantage don't go much beyond that—except that it sometimes puts people upon their guard as one wants to be off it. I have got a little pressing business on hand to-morrow—in the forging line—and must now be off; but if one or two of you will be at the Bank to-morrow afternoon, at, let us say three o'clock, I shall be sure to be there to meet you.'

CHAPTER XXVII.—THE BANK-NOTES.

It was arranged, to my infinite joy, before retiring to rest that night, that I was to make one of the Bank party. Marmaduke insisted on accompanying us, being above measure curious about the matter, and eager to know the worst (or the best) regarding it. Mr Long had to return to Fairburn for his Sunday's duty, and Mr Clint could not spare the time from his parchments; so Mr Harvey Gerard and we two young men went forth upon the trail together. As the paper-chase is the most glorious pursuit undertaken by boys, as fox-hunting is the sport of sport for men, so man-hunting is the avocation fitted for heroes. I know nothing like it for interest and excitement—nothing. If I could only imbue my readers with one-tenth of the absorbing concern with which we, the subordinate actors in this drama of mystery, now began to be devoured, they would be sorry indeed when this narrative comes to a conclusion. We three were at the appointed spot some minutes before the hour which had been agreed upon for meeting the Bow Street Runner; but before the chimes of the Old Exchange clock had ceased their *Life let us cherish*—the tune which they always played on Fridays—the Bow Street Runner appeared.

Passing through a great room within the Bank,

in which, to my unaccustomed eye, were displayed the riches of Croesus, and where the golden showers seemed unceasingly to rain, we were conducted into a private apartment, where sat some gray-headed official, uncommunicative, calm, like one who has had his glut even of wealth, and to whom money, whether in bullion or paper, was no longer any object.

'Well, Mr Townshend, what can I do for you?' inquired he sedately. 'I trust you are not come about any fresh wrongs against the Old Lady of Threadneedle Street. I never see your face but I think of an imitation bank-note, and diminution of the stock in our cellar.'

'Thank you, sir,' responded the runner cheerfully.—'I am afraid that I shall have to see you in a day or two respecting a matter of that very kind, but to-day I am come on a different business. A gentleman of high rank has been missing for three weeks, or more; and his absence has given the greatest anxiety to these his friends. He was known to have in his possession certain one-pound Bank of England notes—twenty in all, of which the numbers are known. We wish to know whether they have been paid in hither in the meantime, and if so, by whom.'

'Have you any order from the deputy-governor?'

'Why, no, sir,' responded the runner insinuatingly. 'I thought that would not be necessary between you and me.'

'Well, well, I suppose you must have your own way, Townshend. You're a dangerous man to cross.' And the old gentleman wagged his head in a blandly humorous manner, and made a little golden music with his bunch of seals. 'The numbers of the notes are here, are they? From 82961 to 80. Very good.' Here he rang a silver bell, which presently produced an official personage, something between a gentleman-usher and a pew-opener. 'You may shew this party over the cancelled department, James; and let Mr Townshend investigate anything he pleases.'

With a not over-courteous nod, the old gentleman resumed his study of a certain enormous volume, that looked, said Marmaduke, like the quarto edition of Chaucer, but which it is reasonable to conclude was something else. We were straightway conducted through several vast and echoing chambers, into a spacious fire-proof vault, where the notes that had been paid into the Bank awaited the periodical cremation.

'A week later, and we might not have been in time,' remarked the Bow Street Runner, since every bank-note is burned within a month of its having found its way home again. If Sir Massingberd has come to a violent end, and been robbed of his money, we shall probably find it all here, as those who despoiled him would be anxious to get the notes changed at once.' Our guide led the way to a certain department of the chamber, with the same accuracy which a student would evince with respect to a shelf in his own library, and took up in his hand a bundle of one-pound notes; they were for the most part very dirty and greasy, but he separated one from the other with a surprising ease and celerity, reading out the numbers as he did so. '82900, 1, 2, 3—now we are getting near it,' observed the official. 'Let us see, 951, is it not?'

'82961,' gasped I, 'and the next nineteen.' I could scarcely frame the words, so great was my excitement. Marmaduke's eyes gleamed with

anxiety and impatience; and even Mr Gerard held his breath, while the clerk continued in a dry mechanical tone:

'51, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 wanting—7, 8, 9 all wanting. 82960—here you have it; 61 wanting; 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. There are none of them here. Stop a bit. 82977—that's one, isn't it?'

'Yes,' cried I, 'that's one. Pray, let me look at it.'

'Certainly not, sir,' responded the official severely. 'With regard to Mr Townshend, I have my orders, but as respects him only.'

'Perfectly right,' remarked the Bow Street Runner approvingly. 'Then please to give it to me, my man. Are there any more?'

'Yes, there are—78, 79, 80.'

'Good. That is four in all, then.' The detective took them up, and shewed them to me: of course, I could not identify them; but still I felt some awe to think what hands—hands imbued with blood, perchance—those notes might have passed through since I had seen Sir Massingberd thrust them into his pocket.

'I cannot carry these away with me, my good friend, I suppose?' inquired Mr Townshend persuasively.

'By no manner of means, Mr Runner,' replied the guardian of these unctuous treasures with dignity. 'His Majesty himself would never be so mad as to ask such a thing. A written order from the governor himself would not permit you to do it.'

'Very good, sir; then we won't trouble the governor to write one,' returned the detective drily. 'What I must know, however—permission or no permission—is this: by whose hand were these sweet-smelling and precious articles paid into the Bank of England?'

It would have been amusing, under less anxious circumstances, to have watched the demeanour of these two personages, each jealous of the dignity of those by whom he was employed, and neither in the least disposed to surrender one tittle of his delegated authority.

'That information will no doubt be supplied to you,' replied the official stiffly, 'if it is thought right—and not otherwise. Follow me, gentlemen, if you please, and I will direct you to the office where such an application may be made.'

This we did; and I am bound to say met with very great civility from the superintendent of the department in question. In spite of the admirable and systematic manner in which the huge establishment was carried on, it was not easy, and in many cases would have been impossible, to discover what individual had paid in any particular note, but every pains and trouble were taken in our behalf, to effect this. Out of the four notes, only one, No. 82979, could be identified as having been received from any particular person—one Mr Worrall, a silk-merchant in the City. Having expressed our warmest thanks to the authorities, we immediately called a coach, and started off to this gentleman's warehouse. We were so fortunate as to find him in, although he was just upon the point of setting forth to his private residence. Upon an examination of his books, we discovered no record of the bank-note about which we were concerned; still, he frankly owned to us that such memoranda were not kept with excessive accuracy. 'It is possible yet that the people at the Bank may have been correct,' cried he. 'You had better

return there; and since the matter is one of life and death, I do not mind confiding to you, that if that note has passed through our hands at all, it will have the letter W, in red, upon the back of it; it is very small, but still can be deciphered without a magnifying-glass.'

'There was no mark,' observed I, 'upon any of the notes I saw.'

'There was a mark,' remarked the Bow Street Runner reflectively; 'and I am pretty sure it was upon this very note. It is no wonder that you did not see it, young gentleman, since your livelihood does not depend, as mine does, upon keeping my eyes about me. The mark in question was also almost obliterated by the red "Cancelled" which the Bank had placed upon the note; but as far as I could make out, it was the letter O.'

'That is the private mark of the Metropolitan Oil Company,' exclaimed Mr Worrall without hesitation. 'Although, indeed, because I have told my own secrets, I am not sure that I am justified in revealing those of other people. Their offices are in the very next street to this.'

Off we started like hounds who, after a check, have once more struck the scent. Business in the City had by this time greatly diminished, and many of the shops were closed; but the Oil Company's emporium, as behoved it, was lighted up from cellar to garret, to give assurance to the world that what they sold could turn Night, and even London Fog, into Day. Notwithstanding the extreme luminosity of the premises, we found the accounts of the establishment, however, rather opaque and complicated; and although nothing could exceed the pains which the clerks put themselves to upon our account, it was several hours before No. 82979 could be identified both as respected its incoming and outgoing. Finally, however, we gleaned the certain information, that the note in question had been received only a day or two previously by the Oil Company from a Mr Vanderseld, the skipper of a foreign vessel, then lying in the port of London, but which he had informed them was to sail immediately. He had bought a small quantity of oil for his cabin lamps, and taken it with him, but had ordered a large supply to be sent to his address in Hamburg, and with this address we were made acquainted.

'Well, Mr Townshend,' quoth Mr Harvey Gerard as we rolled homewards in a hackney-coach after seven hours of this man-hunting, 'what think you that this news portends? Is the game still afoot, or is it only dead game—quarry?'

'I can speak with no sort of certainty yet,' replied the Bow Street Runner; 'but next to all the notes having been paid into the Bank on the 17th or so—which, as I told you, would have almost indicated Sir Massingberd's murder and robbery, without any doubt—I know of no worse tidings than this, of their having come from Hamburg. There's a regular agency abroad, and particularly in that town, for the sale of Bank of England notes dishonestly come by. If a thief cannot get to the Bank immediately, to turn his plunder into gold, he sends it across the water; and then it comes back to us at home, through honest hands enough. We must communicate, of course, with Vanderseld; but the probability is that he will be unable to give us any information. These sea-fellows take account of nothing except what concerns their own trade. He may remember the quarter that the

wind was blowing from upon the day he had the note, to a nicety; but he won't have a notion, bless you, as to who paid it him. No—it's the worst sign yet, to my mind, that that 'ere note has come through foreign hands.—But don't you be downhearted, my young gentleman,' added the Bow Street Runner, addressing himself to Marmaduke, who looked very fagged and anxious; 'I'll find your respected uncle, mind you, let him be where he will; and if he's dead, why, you shall see his corpse, though I have to dig it up with my finger-nails.' With which comforting statement, we had, for that evening, to be content.

TAXES.

THE tax-payer is the Atlas of our social system; he bears up Church and State upon his shoulders. He is to us as important as the tortoise that carries the elephant that carries the world is in Hindu cosmogony. And taxes, without which government cannot exist, are much older than history. Abraham passed through Pharaoh's custom-house—a settled institution, even of that day, and, to all appearance, no novelty. As direct taxation invariably precedes indirect, we may be pretty sure that the tax-gatherer was no unfrequent visitor among the palm-thatched huts of Nile, ages before the great patriarch came forth from Mamre. Egypt, indeed, has always been one of the best taxed of countries; its very physical characteristics made exaction easy, and invited what the Chinese style a 'squeeze.' A long narrow valley of rich land, in a setting of mountain and desert, absolutely dependent on a great river for life, the means of life, and locomotion, and peopled by industrious slaves, was the most taxable of kingdoms.

The Hebrews, previous to Solomon's expensive reign, did not pay very heavy taxes; their chief burden was the tithe that maintained the Levites, and their other offerings were not of a very onerous nature. But there is little reason to doubt that the subjects of the Assyrian and Babylonian kings, like those of the Mede and Persian subsequently, were cruelly ground by the exactions of the royal officers. The modern Persians have a saying, that 'when the Shah demands an egg, his servants seize a cow,' and on this principle, satrap and pacha have acted from time immemorial. Every oriental governor, from Nimrod's reign to that of the present golden-footed one of Ava, has looked on his province as a milch cow, to be wrung dry as early as possible; and in his small way, every petty policeman and lean official has imitated the great man's example. Customs, capricious and annoying; gifts, extorted by terror; inheritance, enforced by violence; confiscation, fines, tenths, fifths, and first-fruits, have sucked away the life-blood from Asia. Industry itself has failed, in the vast Mohammedan world, to keep pace with taxation.

Of Greek taxes, there is little to be said. The Hellenes, in their vestries, rather raised a rate than levied a tax. They knew each other, and each other's means, so well, and every statesman's life was so open and patent to the demos, that crushing imposts would have been hardly possible in their case. But if they spared their own pockets, they bled the purses of their vassals and colonists of isle and mainland without mercy or scruple. In this respect, the Romans were as bad as the Greeks. Orderly in all things, they imposed taxes in a

symmetrical way, but in a ratio sadly oppressive. The citizens, the haughty freemen, were let off lightly enough; the tamed provincials of Gaul, Spain, and Egypt paid dearly for Rome's tutelage; but the conquered tributaries and vassal barbarians were fleeced pitilessly and persistently; not only did the proconsul, the procurator, the dux maximus, fatten on spoil that never reached the Capitol intact, but the publican feathered his nest at the expense of the public.

These farmers of the revenue, who, under the name of publicans, are coupled with sinners in Scripture, were sad rogues, cosmopolite leeches, who, in all climes and ages, have battered on the blood of nations. In Judaea, as in all the south-eastern portion of the Roman empire, they were generally Greeks, or those Ionian Jews who are called 'Grecians' in Holy Writ. They were not only unpopular, but infamous; yet, such as they were, they held sub-contracts under some mightier knave than themselves, and ground or cajoled the needy, while they fawned upon Caesar's lieutenants. Few men will do evil gratis. The publicans certainly had not clean hands, nor had the fiscal officers, of whom they were satellites; and thus it fell out, that in the most prosperous reigns, from all the vast extent of the huge luxurious empire, forty-five millions sterling was the utmost amount that could be extracted from the tax-payers; and even this sum—but two-thirds of England's present revenue—was rarely attained. Few emperors ever drew from their overgrown dominions above forty millions sterling, and the sum-total dwindled as the empire decayed.

The Gothic kings of Gaul, England, and Spain, no less than those of Germany, lived on their means, and paid their few guards, their domestics, and their judges and heralds, out of the rents of the crown domains. The Merovingian and Carolingian monarchs of France based their sway on eggs—eggs and chickens, the produce of the royal farms scattered thickly over the realm, and concerning whose feathered occupants Eginhard must have written many a letter at the bidding of Charlemagne. Such direct taxation as existed was almost wholly in kind; when a market opened, the king's officers had so many handfuls from a sack of flour or grain, chose an eleemosynary porker in one place, and took toll of a basketful of fresh-caught eels at another. This species of tithing would have been mild enough if it had been practised by royalty alone; but abbot and bishop, lords of manors, knights, mayors, and sheriffs, had also their several claims to green geese and white money, beer, bacon, and ryemeal. And what with scot and wattle, multure and heriots, corvée and pre-emption, fines, gratifications, usance, glove-money, duty-hens, coshering, black-mail, and Easter offerings—what with these and a myriad of other strange-sounding exactions, the commonalty were closely clipped, from Connaught to Croatia.

Danegeld coming to an end with the Danish incursions that had called it into being, the chief English taxes were Peter's-pence—which, nominally at least, went to the pope—and the subsidies voted by parliament. These last were always looked upon as extraordinary grants to meet some emergency of foreign or domestic war; for the theory of the British constitution was, that the sovereign should provide, out of his own funds, the sums necessary for what we now name imperial

purposes. This was no very unreasonable idea in middle-aged England. The king had no standing army; no guards, beyond a few yeomen in his colours, and his household knights; no navy, save the ships which the Cinque Ports furnished at their own charges; and yet, so constant was the expense caused by war, and so many fair angels and rose-nobles went in the hire of mercenaries, that in the Plantagenet reigns the people began to kick against their burdens.

The capitation-tax was just the tax to please the fancy of the King Cophetuas of old days; it was simple, and caught all fish, big and little, in its net. It had a seeming fairness, too, which blinded the rulers of a land to the gross injustice of mulcting rich and poor by the same unbending standard. Accordingly, the poll-tax, with or without a limit as to age, was a favourite resource of Gothic financiers. They had authority for what they did. The Romans had set them the example, and so had eastern princes. The Mohammedans, and especially the Turks, raised half their revenue by means of the haratch, a tax levied on every male Jew or Christian rayah. So a poll-tax was the safety-valve of medieval Chancellors of the Exchequer.

The English people, like the sturdy Flemings of Ghent and Bruges, were not always passive when courtly shears cropped their fleeces too closely. When Wat Tyler, the Dartford mechanic, brained a royal collector with his hammer, there were angry thousands ready to take up spear and bow in his and their quarrel. When Jack Straw looked down from Hampstead heights upon London, or when Cade's fierce rabble came roaring across from Southwark to Cheape, they did but express the resolve of the nation not to endure beyond a certain pitch. Parliament itself was often stubborn, always jealous of its right to unloose the purse-strings of Britannia, and Henry VIII, who crushed men's consciences without pity, was quite unable to levy his pet subsidy of a sixth of all goods upon his own kingly authority.

By selling monopolies, by screwing fines out of every heir who held lands under the crown, by confiscation of traitors' wealth, and by spoils of conquest, Henry's successors contrived to make both ends meet. Strictly speaking, these discreditable resources ought not to have been needed by them. The crown was very rich in lands and seignories. There were the customs and excise, more productive in every new decade; there was the land-tax, and there was the hearth-tax, besides other sources of revenue. But a standing army and a brilliant court are sad devourers, and to compass these ends, Charles I. fought out that dreary contest about 'ship-money,' which began in Westminster Hall, and ended at the block in Palace Yard.

Cromwell, in the matter of taxation, was King Stork to the British Batrachians who had set him up to reign over them. The country was mapped out into districts, each commanded by a major-general, whose task it was to raise each month an assessment for military expenses. This assessment, drawn from a population of about five millions of persons, in addition to the common taxes, amounted to a sum of forty-five thousand pounds monthly. Laud and Wentworth would perhaps have been satisfied with less, had the scheme of Thorough succeeded; but it would be rash to say that the

earl and the archbishop would have been milder rulers than Oliver, who gave money's worth for the money. Under Charles II., the excise dues and custom duties were somewhat higher; but the taxation was trifling to that which weighed on our neighbours the French.

France, from the reign of the Valois to the great Revolution, was very heavily burdened. The gorgeous court and huge armies of the Bourbon kings, of Louis XIV. above all, starved the nation at large. Every few years, the yoke of taxation grew heavier, the mode of levy more severe, the inquisition into the affairs of the cultivator, the poor Jacques Bonhomme who paid for all, more stringent. In England, no rank conferred immunity from sharing in the national taxation—Howard and Percy, Cavendish and Jerningham, my lord in star and ribbon, the cassocked rector, the bishop in lawn and silk, contributed to the public store, side by side with plain clothiers of Norwich, and bluff graziers of Somerset. There were no unfair exemptions in our country. But in France, the nobles and clergy, proprietors of four acres out of five, throughout the provinces, paid nothing at all. The *tiers état* took all the Vanity Fair of court pageantry, all the pomp of royalty, all the cost of war, on its own tottering shoulders, and suffered more than we can easily imagine in the hundred and ten years or so that preceded the turning of the tables in '89.

India, when we English sharpened our mercantile paws into sword-blades, and turned from traders into conquerors, was pretty much as France had been since Richelieu and Mazarin crushed the feudal nobility. The Moguls were merely a Mohammedan edition of the Bourbons, with Aurungzebe to stand for Louis the Magnificent. But most of these weak and showy sovereigns resembled Louis XV. more than his bigwig of a grandfather, and they had eaten out the heart of India by their exactions before their raj gave place to our own. The Moguls were neither worse nor better than their neighbours of Persia and Burma, or their vassals and rebel satraps. Every prince, Sikh, Moslem, or Rajput, had but one idea—to get the most he could out of merchant, craftsman, and peasant. The poor ryot, helpless and ignorant, fared as sheep would fare if shepherded by wolves; and even when his allegiance passed to the mythic John Company, he was not, save indirectly, the better for the change of masters. It is worthy of notice that India is the only country where a native aristocracy, proud and powerful, has actually been founded upon taxes. Those haughty zemindars of Bengal, those turbulent talookdars of Oude, the exact types of our *Front de Boufs* and *Grant-mesnils* of the twelfth century, are only glorified tax-gatherers. Their estates are no estates at all, but mere tax-collector's beats, and their tenants are virtually the tax-payers of the district.

Of all English taxes, the most bitterly hated was the hearth-tax. The visits of the 'chimney-man' were loathed as only John Bull and his family can loathe an official intruder into the domestic fortress, and the public voice averred that the duty was levied with excessive harshness. The villagers of Stuart times regarded the collector of this tax as an absolute ogre, filching the crust from their hungry children, selling their poor beds and three-legged stools, and pillaging their shelves of Delft ware. They gave William of Orange no rest until they had extorted from him a promise, more

binding than such royal promises have usually proved, of the repeal of the hearth-tax.

Under the Georges, indirect taxation was more severe and general, prior to Mr Pitt's income-tax and the assessed taxes, than direct. The excise and customs were the real pillars of government, and smugglers were looked on by many honest housewives as real benefactors to families, worthy fair-dealers who remedied the wrongs and pilferings of those rogues the riding-officers and tide-waiters. By the end of the eighteenth century, the discontent of the nation was very great. True, Britons were better off than Frenchmen; true, all paid their share, and there were no farmers-general, as abroad, to fatten on the hunger of the poor. But there was much grumbling. An Englishman, it was said, 'makes his taxed will upon taxed paper, sips his taxed physic from a taxed glass with a taxed spoon, and draws his last breath on a taxed bed, by light coming through a taxed window.'

Manufacturers complained, very justly, that the exciseman was a spy in their establishments, a privileged interloper, who had the right to check improvement, and to compel adherence to bad old wasteful ways, lest the inland revenue should suffer. Prudent citizens complained that the population of the coast had grown demoralised, fierce, and lawless by graduating in the evil school of the contraband trade; and when the assessed taxes were imposed, with the avowed intention of employing the proceeds in bolstering up the alliance of the German royalties against France, the outcry was loud enough, till it was drowned by the roll of Wellington's drums.

Readers of old pamphlets and papers may recollect how the Duke of Norfolk was held up to opprobrium in the *Anti-Jacobin* because his hair, and that of his Grace's groom,

Unpowdered, braved the weather.

This aberration from custom was a practical protest against the hair-powder duty; the Duke of Bedford caused the tails of his carriage-horses to be powdered, in ridicule of the tax; while the Duke of Northumberland boldly went to St Martin's vestry, made oath that he had eight children, and claimed the deduction which the law conceded to those tax-payers whose quivers were full.

The next great financial change was comprised in what was popularly called the Peel tariff, the dawn of a new system, wholly at variance with the old one. For the first time in the world's history, rulers were found capable of perceiving that to lower the price of a commodity was to enhance its consumption, and thus to swell the revenue while relieving the public. It was the principle of penny-postage, of low duties on imports, of banishing the exciseman from workshop and factory. It is now so familiar to us, that it seems hard to believe that it was ever scouted as an enormous heresy. Yet the old plan was to pile up duties, to get as much as possible out of every pound of tea or cask of sugar, and to set high gains against diminished quantity. Such was the antique system, happily growing obsolete, save in barbarous countries.

As for direct taxes, they may be more logical, but they have one drawback—the tax-payer cannot be shorn without being aware of the liberties taken with his golden or silvern fleece. An old woman might sip her tea through life, and no more know

that her little caddy helped to keep the great state engine at work, than M. Jourdain knew that he had always been talking prose. But ask Mrs Partington for one sixpence through the agency of a man with a big book, spectacles, and an inkhorn, and she will appreciate her sacrifices in Britain's cause. Direct taxes are always odious. Hundreds of thousands held the superstitious belief, that the inventor of the window-duty was struck blind as a punishment for his impious tampering with the light of heaven. And that the income-tax is not regarded with any particular favour, it needs but a glance at *Punch* to prove.

LIGHTS AND SHADOWS OF LONDON LIFE.

A JUVENILE PARTY.

THERE are three 'distances,' as painters call them, of domestic trouble, one beyond the other, in which Man, being mortal, is likely to find himself.

The first is the bondage of matrimony simple. I say 'simple,' because in Mohammedan countries it is permitted to marry more than one wife, while in our own the precept, that 'no man can serve two masters,' is happily insisted upon by the Law.

The second is the position of Paterfamilias encumbered with female children.

The third is that of Paterfamilias harassed with boys.

The writer of these words is in the middle distance; there is, he knows, a deeper depth beyond, and from that knowledge he has sometimes reaped satisfaction, at others derived terrors which it took months to prove imaginary. I have often seen the male children of my friends, in charge of their natural guardians, with heartfelt gratitude for my own freedom from such inflictions; but I have never known, until the experience about to be narrated, how much indeed I had to be thankful for. Let our title lack a wearer after our noble self; let our landed estates descend by entail to the offspring of our hated cousin; but oh, ye stars of nativity, O *Juno Matrona*, save me, save me from being the father of a boy!

Girls are troublesome enough at times. I have no desire to exalt them into unmitigated blessings; I look upon them rather as 'escapes from boys'; but they are tender and affectionate, and, by comparison, easily subjugated. One can drive six-in-hand of them—which is exactly the number fallen to my share—harnessed to the domestic chariot, easier than a boy in single harness. It is pleasant to see them run willingly up and down stairs on messages; and flock to meet one, and take one's hat and gloves, on coming home from business. I am an oldish bird, not easily caught by chaff, but my little girl can wile almost anything out of me. I find myself going with them to the pantomime—which I consider to be a medley of stupid jokes and meaningless noise—at two o'clock in the afternoon, when I ought to be in the City; and I have come home in an omnibus so laden with toys upon a Christmas-eve, as to be publicly objected to by my fellow-passengers. When one marries after forty, as I did, one is more induced to make a fool of one's self in this way, and the younger the child is, I think the more power the little darling has

over one. My beloved Mabel, aged four, and called May for brevity and dearness, pulled my wig off the other day in the presence of persons of distinction of both sexes, and yet I had not the heart to scold her. I would certainly have put a boy to death, to slow music, for hinting that I wore such a thing.

It was Mabel, I am afraid, who let me in for the juvenile party. 'Papa, dear, I want a dudenile tarty,' was her observation one morning when she came in, as usual, to superintend my shaving operations; and I, thinking that she meant something to eat, said: 'Very well; then you shall have it.' This concession, made under the greatest misapprehension, was held by the rest of the family, including even the wife of my bosom, as a promise; and there was no peace for the present writer until it was fulfilled. I did not myself entertain any great apprehensions of the result. I thought that half-a-dozen little girls would be invited to play for a few hours with our own, and that they would have cake and wine, and go away again. I certainly did not anticipate any personal inconvenience from their coming. I intended to arrive at home from the City an hour earlier than ordinary, in order to see the young folks enjoying themselves, and then to dine as comfortably as usual, with my digestion assisted by the consciousness of having performed a domestic duty with a good grace. When, therefore, my wife observed at breakfast, upon the morning of the festal-day: 'My love, we must dine at twelve o'clock to-day, if you please,' the suggestion took my breath away.

'At twelve o'clock at night or at noon?' inquired I sarcastically.

'Well, my dear, at noon. I know you hate dining-out of all things, so I have managed that we shall get a dinner—but it will be rather a scramble. And they will be taking the furniture out of both the drawing-rooms, and the school-room must be given up for the early tea; so that we must dine, I am afraid, down stairs in the servants' hall.'

'And why not here in the dining-room?' asked I, aghast at these arrangements.

'Why, you dear silly old man, of course the dining-room table will be all set out for supper long before twelve o'clock; and as for your study'—

'You don't mean to say, madam, that my study will not be sacred!' ejaculated I, laying down the *Times* newspaper, to part with which, at such a time, no light thing would induce me.

'Dear papa's study upthide down,' observed the intelligent Mabel, who, as usual, had taken up her post, in expectation of dainties, at my knee.

I rose in alarm, and sought my sanctuary, to behold with my own eyes the extent of the damage. The sacred apartment had already been turned into a dressing-room. My desk and papers were thrust into a corner, and their place upon the table occupied by a looking-glass and combs and brushes. The genius of Discomfort had rendered in twenty minutes the snuggest apartment in the house as cheerless as a hairdresser's back room.

'Good Heavens!' cried I, 'who is it who demands these sacrifices? Cannot half-a-dozen of the girls of my friends Jones and Robinson be entertained without all this fuss? When we lived in the country, my house was never turned topsy-turvy in this manner.'

Because in our country-house there was lots of room, my love,' returned my wife. 'A juvenile party in London requires a good deal of preparation, and it is necessary to economise our space.'

'But, my dear madam,' expostulated I, 'you don't mean to say that six extra girls, however preposterous may be their crinolines, require'—

'There are more than six,' observed my wife sententially: 'you know you promised Mabel a juvenile party.'

'How many, then, are coming in all?' gasped I with anxiety. 'Tell me the worst—that is, the most that are likely to come.'

'Well, it is impossible to say, some mothers are so stupid about answering invitations; but we are sure of three-and-thirty at least.'

'Three-and-thirty little girls coming to-night, madam! What! *They're not all girls.* Do you mean to tell me that you have asked any horrid boys?'

'Well, my dear love, you wouldn't have been so absurd as to give a juvenile party composed entirely of one sex. The girls would not enjoy it without the boys.'

'I am sorry to hear it,' replied I despondingly. 'At what time do they all go away?'

'Now, I do hope you are not going to desert us,' exclaimed my consort, laying her fingers affectionately upon my arm. '*We depend upon you for providing amusement, you know.* The master of the house always does that. He either "dresses up"——

'Dresses up!' ejaculated I indignantly. 'What do you mean by that, madam?'

'Why, he pretends to be a beggar-man, or a Bengal tiger, or something of that sort; and if he doesn't mind running about on all-fours'——

'But if he *does* mind, madam,' interrupted I with sternness—'if he declines, at his time of life, to expose himself to any description of ridicule, what does he do then?'

'Well, then, of course, he goes out into the town, and hires a *Conjuror*, or a *Punch and Judy*, or a *Magic Lantern*. There are lots of shops which send out these sort of people.'

'What sort of shops, madam?' inquired I with the calmness of despair. 'I will do anything in reason; but I never happened to hire a *Conjuror* in my life.'

'The toy-shops, of course; or you may hire one at the *Mausoleum*—as I saw advertised in the newspaper some time ago—that is a very good place to get one, I should think.'

'The *Mausoleum* is shut up,' returned I sulkily, 'and its dreary entertainments are closed by the bankruptcy of its proprietor.'

'Yes, but another man has got it now, and you will find what you want there all the same. And now, my love, if you wouldn't mind, perhaps you'll leave us to ourselves a little, because we want the room.'

'Then you turn me out of the house, in short, do you? Well, you will not see me back again at twelve o'clock, madam, I do assure you. I shall take my dinner elsewhere, since a proper meal at home is denied to me.'

'There's a darling love,' responded my wife, embracing me tenderly. 'I knew he would, if it was only properly put before him. For once and away, we really shall get on better without you. You will find us all anxiously waiting for you

about four o'clock, and supper will be ready for the grown-up people—after the children have had theirs—at nine o'clock precisely.'

'The grown-up people, Mrs P.—why, this is the first time I have heard of them!'

'Well, of course, there must be *some* grown-up people, my dear, unless you prefer to apply for some policemen, to keep order. And my uncle Chutney—you know how violent he gets if we don't ask him to every sort of entertainment we give—I was obliged to send him an invitation.'

'Colonel Chutney at a juvenile party!' ejaculated I, throwing my hands up; 'why, he'll be using bad language before the children.'

'Yes, my love, I am afraid he will; but, then, fortunately, he always swears in Hindustanee. Now, don't you be later than four o'clock; there's a dear man. And here's your hat, and here are your gloves; and don't forget the *Conjuror*.'

Thus was I turned out of my own house, and driven remorselessly to the *Mausoleum*. That place of public amusement has not a cheerful appearance even under the most favourable circumstances, but I thought its Grecian portico never looked so lowering as upon the present occasion. The porter smiled a ghastly smile as I set foot in the entrance-hall, for I was the first pleasure-seeker who had darkened its threshold that morning, and informed me that the Experiments connected with the Galvanic Battery were about to commence in the western corridor. Declining to have my spirits further depressed by any such spectacle, I asked, with some magnificence of manner, to see the Proprietor. 'I wish,' said I, 'for a personal interview upon a matter of business.'

'You ain't agoing to take the place, are you, sir?' inquired the porter, rubbing his hands in a propitiatory manner. 'I 'ave been here a many years, sir, and 'ope I may still keep the situation, I could shew you certificates from three-and-twenty as 'ave had the *Mausoleum* at one time or another.'

'I have not a doubt of it, my good man,' returned I; 'and each of them, I believe, had a certificate of their own to shew from Mr Commissioner Fonblanque. I am only come about hiring a *Conjuror* for a Juvenile Party.'

'O dear me, sir,' replied the porter, 'you will not get anything of that sort here. We used to be in that way at one time, but we are working under quite a different system now. We are all for practical science, we are, and the elevation of the public intellect.'

'Oh, then, you don't let out a *Punch and Judy*, nor a *Magic Lantern*, of course.'

'O dear, no, sir,' cried the porter, looking round suspiciously as though the gigantic pillars of the vestibule themselves had ears. 'Oh, pray don't mention no such things as that. If you wanted an Electrifying Machine, or even a *Horrorery*'——

'Thank you,' said I, 'very much, but I don't think that that would do at all.' And I left the melancholy porter watching for a scientific pleasure-seeker, and wandered on upon my dreadful errand elsewhere. Having selected a mammoth toy-shop, where the Noah's Arks in the windows were about the size of the real houses in my own neighbourhood, I walked in, and inquired for a magician on hire.

'What,' said I, 'is your usual charge for the loan of a conjuror for an evening?'

'Well, sir,' replied the man of toys, 'we can let you have a very good one for three guineas.'

'That is a great deal of money for tricks,' observed I.

'The whole apparatus is included in that sum,' remarked the other persuasively, 'and the sugar-plums he distributes are warranted genuine.'

'Still,' said I, 'I think your conjurer is a little dear.'

'We have them of all descriptions,' answered the proprietor, in a less respectful tone: 'some of them go out so low as ten and six.'

'Those must be professors of a very inferior kind, I conclude,' observed I, wishing him to contradict me above all things. But the master of the magi only shrugged his shoulders, and threw out his hands contemptuously. 'I understand you,' said I; 'they would only be just clever enough to steal the spoons. Now, do you let out a Punch and Judy?'

'Two, ten, six,' responded the proprietor curtly; 'or, without the Dog Toby, two guineas.'

Now, I had heard of the play of *Hamlet* without the Prince of Denmark, but of Punch and Judy without Dog Toby, I had never heard.

'A man with a monster magic lantern would be how much!' inquired I.

'A guinea and his expenses,' returned the proprietor, less respectfully than ever.

'Then let him be at my house by six o'clock,' said I; and I presented my card of address.

Having made an early dinner with great discomfort at a chop-house, and feeling intensely fatigued with walking about, instead of doing my business as usual in the City, I returned home at about half-past five. I let myself softly in; and passing on tiptoe the drawing-room, from which proceeded a tumult of juvenile revelry, I found myself safe in my dressing-room, where there is a little bed, on which I determined to take forty winks, to strengthen me for the festivities to follow. I had taken off my peruke, in order that this interval of repose might be more enjoyable, and was about to put on my dressing-gown, when I heard the sudden clapping of a pair of tiny hands, and a shrill voice, like that of a malignant fairy, observed: 'O my, if he don't wear a wig!'

A diminutive boy, in blue velvet knickerbockers and pink stockings, whom I suppose I had awakened from slumber, was sitting up on the bed, and staring at me with all his might.

'What is your name,' inquired I, 'you wicked boy! and how dare you come here? What is your name, I say?'

'Dunno,' returned he defiantly.

'What!' cried I; 'don't know your own name? Whom do you belong to?'

'Par!'

'And why are you lying in my bed with your horrid boots on?'

'I don't like the people down stairs,' responded the imp. 'I want my supper.'

'Why, you have only just had tea, have you not?'

'Tea's nothing. I want my supper, I say.'

I rushed out of the room, and screamed: 'Nurse, Nurse!' over the balusters as loud as I could scream.

There was a trampling of many feet, a rustling of many crinolines, and not one nurse, but what seemed to be a legion of them (there were eighteen,

I believe, in the house at that moment), came rushing up the stairs. I stood upon the landing, holding the strange boy by the collar at arms-length, and demanding that he should be delivered to his proper guardian.

'We don't know who has the charge of him, sir,' responded the eldest of these 'young persons,' severely; 'but any one of us will be delighted to take to the darling;' and indeed they at once began to kiss and fondle the little creature, who, had he but been accompanied by a hurdy-gurdy, might have passed for a monkey before a committee of the Zoological Society itself. As he was borne away in a sea of curls and cap-strings, he shrieked out: 'That funny old man has left his hair upon the looking-glass.'

Then, for the first time, it pierced me, like a red-hot wire, that I had forgotten my wig. To remain alone with my own reflections after this circumstance was out of the question, and so I descended to the drawing-room. This apartment seemed to be filled with Marionettes—little creatures in velvet or white muslin, who seemed to have been recently bitten by a tarantula. It was no more possible to recognise an individual than any one dancing-moth in a sunbeam; and after asking one of my own girls how her father was, I gave up pretending to any particular acts of civility. Presently, they formed a circle—a charming fairy ring—and played at a dreadful game called *The Family Coach*, wherein I sustained the part of 'the wheel' with immense applause. I had to get up and turn completely round about six-and-twenty times in every minute, and the satisfaction which the boys took in witnessing the degradation of their senior was quite characteristic. In the midst of one of these revolutions, Colonel Chutney, my wife's uncle, was announced. He has always looked down upon me and my family; but the look of contempt which passed over his copper-coloured countenance at that moment, was absolutely withering.

What had become of that creature with the Magic Lantern?

At last he came, with his three-legged stand for the apparatus, with his 'comic and sentimental slides,' with his 'portable sheet, which can be put in any drawing-room, without injury to the most delicate papering.' Then a temporary darkness fell upon us, accompanied by a priceless silence, which lasted nearly half a second, and was atoned for by vociferous raptures, following upon what the exhibitor described as the first 'hoptical illusion.' The most popular representations were, I am afraid, those which Mr Ruskin would have found most fault with: pictures of gentlemen with elongated chins and exaggerated noses; and when a bald person of repulsive appearance was introduced, and a shrill voice exclaimed: 'There's that funny man again, who left his wig upon the dressing-table,' there was a perfect hurricane of applause. Scarcely less embarrassing was the remark of our own Mabel, who, upon the first appearance of the Flying Cupid, ejaculated with unwonted distinctness: 'Poor, poor!' It dot no tothes on!

The performances were slightly marred by the continued appearance of the boy in knickerbockers between the company and the objects represented;

* An expression of pity; and therefore not in use, as I should imagine, among male infants.

he declined to sit on a chair like other folks, but lay in wait upon the carpet like a wild animal, and sprang upon any optical illusion that took his fancy, under the impression that he could grasp it, though he succeeded only in pulling down the sheet. Nobody present even pretended to any authority over him. He had been brought by somebody, with the message that he was 'to be left till called for,' and a horrible suspicion began to take possession of my mind that I was the victim of a child-dropper. It certainly was only natural that the parent of such a boy should endeavour to get rid of him by any means; but that he should have dressed him up in blue velvet knickerbockers and pink stockings, and dropped him, for good and all, at a juvenile party, was a most unpardonable device. Would the workhouse take him in after 8.30, I wondered? Or would it be better to give him in charge to the police for obtaining supper under false pretences! As the evening grew on, his evil characteristics multiplied. He clamoured for something to eat, and had to be taken down stairs, and fed before the proper time. This did not prevent him, however, from proceeding with his meal while the others took theirs, or prolonging it when they had concluded. In the meantime, Colonel Chutney, C.B., was inveighing in an unknown tongue against all young people, and demanding that the grown-up folks, or at all events himself, should not be kept waiting any longer. He refused to give the servants time to re-arrange the table, but sat at the head of it, in front of the turkey, with a carving-knife and fork in his fingers, like a griffin rampant. I did not dare occupy that position myself, my whole attention being concentrated upon this hateful boy. He was perpetually jumping up to procure some novel dainty, and broke three plates of our best dinner-service in a struggle to snatch the flowers out of the *epervire*. I watched him rove from bonbons to lobster salad with malignant joy.

The front door-bell had been ringing ceaselessly for half an hour, and troop after troop of little ones had departed, muffled and cloaked, with their faithful domestics, but neither cab nor carriage, nor nurse nor footman, had come for that boy. He buzzed about in his blue velvet knickerbockers and pink stockings, like some gorgeous tropical insect, inimical to the repose of man; and when all his contemporaries were gone, he returned to the supper-table, and devoured plateful for plateful with Colonel Chutney, C.B., and the grown-up people. As for me, all appetite had fled with the contemplation of him; and I listened for the wheels of his possible chariot with an absorbing anxiety. He had just announced his intention of partaking of brandy and water with Colonel Chutney, C.B. (who never concludes an evening without that grateful medicine), when the long-looked-for chariot came. I do not know whether it was that exact description of carriage; any vehicle sent for that boy, from a costermonger's cart to the state-coach of the lord mayor, would have been equally welcome; but a female servant of unmistakably 'Irish extraction,' came with it, and demanded, Master Dunno. A little mistake, she said, had occurred, it seemed, as to the number of the house, and she was afraid that she had left 'the darlin' at the wrong evening-party. But she supposed that it didn't much matter; her young masher had evidently enjoyed himself; and all juvenile 'trates' were pretty much alike.

If they are—if they really *are*—I can only say it is a most fortunate circumstance that Christmas, with its Juvenile Party, only comes once a year.

MY BEAUTIFUL LADY.

THIS is a statue in verse, conceived in the brain of a sculptor, brought forth, nursed, educated, and finished; it is one of the most complete poems which this time has produced. It has its faults, indeed, but when the work is honestly read through, they are seen to belong to it naturally, and do not mar the unity and career of the production. The little book has made a strong sensation among thoughtful art-loving people; indeed so strong, that if Mr Woolner is not spoiled, and does not therefore commit himself to some second and inferior work, he deserves as much praise for his common sense as for his poetical genius. Let him wipe his pen and lay it down. He has finished a poem, and left us with a feeling that he has drawn to a sound and wise focus what he has been moved to say about the conduct of life.

'My Beautiful Lady' sets forth the transmutation of a soul. We have a strong human heart, in a strong human body, smitten with love. But as the sense of this grows sweeter to the man, and the vision begins to gather reality, it really fades. Horrible bitter thoughts whirl him round. Here the poem staggers. Death comes calmly, unfeelingly on, and quietly bears away the lady from her choking, maddened lover. Then he drops, struck with the 'mace of oblivion.' But he is not dead. He rises from the grave of his old hopes to that which is better, and with all that is eternal of his love still quick within him, works his work with ripe and hopeful patience.

There is a hearty English ending to this poem. No one can read it without a wholesome sense of having felt the breath of a brave spirit. It does us good. Sometimes, in the progress of the thought, we come painfully across that which is diseased, exaggerated, ecstatic. But we draw clear of this as we draw to an end, and when we put the book down, we feel a sense of victory, a clearance away of all mere emotional and fervid purpose, and instead of it, a quiet buoyant faith, which helps us to call the things in the world around by their right names, and do what we have to do without haste or fear.

Let us look at a few lines of the poem itself, raising the thread here and there to note the onward progress of the web. First, however, we may remark, as it might interrupt the short course of our review to stop and mention it elsewhere, that there is a careful finish about this sculptor's writing. He has not the nerve nor pregnant choice with which Tennyson is gifted, but he often chooses singularly happy suggestive words. He works out the members of his verse as he would the finger-nail of a statue. He speaks of the high-poised hawk, 'whose nerved wing-tips tremble with might suppressed.' There are a few lines like this which open all that can be said about a matter as by a magic spring. He is not equal to Barnes in his conception of the country; nay, he makes mistakes, which a perfectly true observer of nature would, I think, hardly commit. For instance, he is walking in a wood with his lady, who marks a 'nest built snug.' Very well; but in the stanza before this he says: 'A flock of goldfinches arrest their

flight till they strike with vexed trills away! Now, finches do not flock in the nest-building time. This is a trifle, but it makes one feel that his rural imagery is not, as it should be, severely true, drawn from quick knowledge of the cornfield and the copse.

However, let that pass; he evidently loves the country, though he may miss the lesser notes of its music, and confuse the chorus of its harmonised seasons.

The poem opens with a glance over many phases of sorrow. Some who writhe, yet

To others seeming gild their lives
With cheerfulness, and every duty tend,
As if their aspects told the truth within.

In the list of sufferers, he puts one often forgotten:

A thinker, whose long-piercing care perceives
His nation goes the road that ends in shame.

Others there are, lying fast concealed,
Unutterably sad,
Which have not been, and never may be known.

But there is sorrow which, after all, does not make a chronic sore in the soul. He says, not without the conviction of experience:

We may well call happy one whose grief,
Mixed up with sacred memories of the past,
Can tell to others how the tempest rose
That struck and left him lonely in the world.

He then addresses himself to the work of narration, with a warning to those smiling, cackling spirits whose

Rapid thoughts and freak
Of skimming word, and glance, more frequently
Than either malice, settled hate, or scorn,
Support confusion, and pervert the right.

They whom the brunt of war has maimed in limb,
Who lean on crutches to sustain their weight,
Are manifest to all; and reverence
For their misfortunes kindly gains them place:
But wounds, sometimes more deep and dangerous,
We may in careless jostle through the crowd,
Gall and oppress because to us unknown.

The next chapter of the work is 'Love,' its stimulating freshness, its cherished memory. It travels across the world of men like a patch of sunlight over woods and fields seen from a hill:

A moment warmed,
He scarcely feels its loveliness before
The light departing leaves his saddened soul
More cold than ere it came.

Thus love once shone,
And blessed my life, so vanished into gloom.

Then comes the first canto of the poem proper, 'My Beautiful Lady.' He loves—

As a young forest while the wind drives through,
My life is stirred when she breaks on my view.
Her beauty grants my will no choice
But silent awe, till she rejoice
My longing with her voice.

There is no one else of any account to him:

My lady's name, when I hear strangers use,
Not meaning her, to me sounds lax misuse.

The month of May forgets her own pursuit to honour the 'lady with the sunlit hair.'

He holds breath with loving worship for a while, and then pours out his passion, which is not flung back upon himself.

I stood and felt her trickling tears.

The rest I keep; a holy charm, a source
Of secret strength and comfort on my course.
Her glory left my pathway bright;
And stars on stars throughout the night
Came blooming into light.

Then comes 'Dawn.' Returned love lightens up and gives steady promise to his whole life. After this follows 'Noon.' Yes, it is true; all things now belong to his success. The tune goes manly. He bids the bird

Warbling about the riot of thy heart;
Thine utmost rapture cannot equal mine.

The world is flooded with love. The blossoms, the bees, the wind, the flowering gorse, the shining clouds cannot touch the splendour and sweetness of his day. They lag behind the chariot of his joy:

For Love's own voice has owned her love is mine.

'Night' is the next canto: he moralises. The dryness of the dull pedantic world around contrasts itself with his inspiration. They boggle, creep, and snarl.

What trite old folly unharmonious sages
In dull books write or prattle day by day
Of sin original and growing crime!
And commentating the advance of time,
Say wrong has fostered wrong for countless ages,
The strong ones marking down the weak for prey.

Why fill they not with love the printed page?

After a kindly look on pastoral life—the ploughman, the shepherd and his dog, the 'village lights,' 'glimmering starlike,' and a conviction that they all feel grateful in their lowly place—he has a rhapsody beneath his lady's window, and gives some short cantos to the full beauty of his love.

We have 'Wild Rose,' 'My Lady's Glory,' 'Her Shadow,' 'Her Garden.' Here, however, a terrible foreboding comes suddenly into his heart, as he sees her bending over some smitten flowers.

The mad gale had rioted and thrown
Far drifts of snowy petals, fiercely blown
The stalks in twisted heaps: one flower alone
Yet hung and lit the waste, the latest blossom born
Among its fallen kinsmen left forlorn.

A glance
Of chilly splendour tinged her countenance
And told the saddened truth, that stress of blighting
weather
Had made her lilies and my lady droop together.

We cannot pause to make extracts from 'Tolling Bell,' in which he sits by her couch, where she, with a voice which moves as

The tide
Of steady music, rich and calm,
In some grand cathedral psalm,
and with a heart full of immortality, pleads against his bitter growth of disappointment. She says:

We are the Lord's, not ours.
Mine own, bow meekly to your King.

Still we have a flicker of life, a reprieve for a short while,

Gone the sickness, fled the pain,
Health comes bounding back again,
And all my pulses tingle for delight.

But hope is only 'Will-o'-the-Wisp,' which is the title of the next canto, followed by 'Given Over.'

The men of learning say she must
Soon pass and be as if she had not been,
To gratify the barren lust
Of Death.
The naked horror numbs me to the bone;
In stupid calm, its cold blank eyes
Set hard at mine. I do not fall or groan,
Our island Gorgon's face has changed me into stone.

Then comes 'Storm.'

Lighted gloom spreads ghastly on the land;
Sheep do crowd;

Quiet are the birds
In ghostly trees that shiver not a sound;
And leaves decayed drop straight unto the ground.

The 'jagged glare and thunder blow' rage outside the lattice; he heeds them not.

What care I though deluges do pour,
Beating earth to mire,
Though heaven shattering with the thunder's roar,
Scorcheth now in fire,
Though every planet, molten from its place,
Should trickle lost through everlasting space.

The uproar of the elements are but a whiff of wind by the side of the great storm breeding within him, as his soul 'in a sick girl's room' hangs expectant of her parting breath. 'My Lady in Death' opens thus:

All is but coloured show.

Her life is now
No more than stories in a printed book.

Throughout this canto, he sways with vehement passion, here and there broken by calm moments of memory, which only collect its force for another bitter burst of rage and sorrow.

Almighty King! could it be just
To let her young life play
Its easy, natural way,
Then with an unexpected thrust,
Strike out the life you lent?

A dreadful tremor ran through space,
When first the mournful toll
Rang for my Lady's soul.
The shining world was hell; her grace
Only the flattering gleam
And mockery of a dream.

Presently, however, the waves begin to settle down, and 'Day-dream' follows:

I know thy earthy form
Is mouldering in its tomb; but yet, O Love,
Thy spirit must dwell somewhere in this waste
Of worlds, that fill the overwhelming heavens
With light and motion: that could never die!

Then comes 'My Lady's Voice from Heaven:'

She warbled low;
She did not sing in words;
I felt it in my spirit glow,
And knew it.

These are some of the voiceless words which touched him:

Thou, blindly gross, didst toy with clay,
And in the ghastly gleam
Of charnel gloom, didst kiss decay;

Thou mournedst not most the vanished soul,
Which was my Lord's through thine.

O turn to Him, and He will be
A refuge from thy misery,
A smile upon thy face!

He rises and moves,

As one called from the dead,
In silence on the ground.
Toward my home I walked, elate
With hope and settled plan.

In the next part, called 'Years After,' he reflects: he sees others suffer, work, and die. Time heals the wound—mellows, ripens the resolution of the man. At last finds the spirit of his mistress warm the body of his Duty. Here he has grown sound and wholesome:

Men may seem playthings of ironic fate;

But there is hope for all; though not for all
To sail through sunny ripples to the end,
Chatting of shipwrecks as pathetic tales.

All are not born
To touch majestic eminence, and shine.

But, through transcendent mercy, all are born
To enter on a nobler heritage
Than these, if each but wills to rightly choose.
In serving Duty, man's prerogative,
Which is far pleasanter than paths of flowers,
Than warmest clustering of household joys,
And prouder than the proudest shouts of fame
That follow actions not in conscience wrought.

This is not the end, but the spirit in which the poem closes—sound, brave sense, which will, we are sure, commend itself to many a British breast, and may even brace up some wavering soul to take its place in life.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE President of the Institution of Civil Engineers, Mr McClean, in his annual address, took a brief review of the progress of the kingdom—contrasting the year 1815, when steam-engines had been in use forty years, with 1856, the end of another period of forty years. In the former, the whole annual income derived from quarries, mines, iron-works, and other property, was £1,452,104; in the latter, it was £18,087,963; an increase of 1200 per cent. This great increase is shown to be in great part due to the introduction and extension of railways, which, besides affording means of transport, offer a safe means of investment, and thereby promote habits of saving and increase of capital. After all the losses and disasters occasioned by railway speculation, 'a reproductive profit has been assured on a capital of nearly £400,000,000.' The land occupied by railways in the United Kingdom is, so states Mr McClean, under 200,000 acres, including stations and appurtenances. The land under agriculture is forty million acres, and yet the railways pay, in property and income tax, nearly as great an amount as is paid by the whole of the farmers of Great Britain.

On the question of coal, it appears that the public may dismiss the misgivings aroused a few months ago by a speech at Newcastle, for although the quantity raised from the mines is about one hundred million tons in the year, by the labour of some three hundred thousand men, we cannot do better, according to Mr McClean, than continue to dig, burn, and export at the same, or even a greater rate. He points out that Sir Roderick Murchison's assertion that coal exists under the lower New Red Sandstone and the Permian formations, is a sufficient reason why we should not begin to be parsimonious in our consumption of coal. Accepting Sir Roderick's assertion as indisputable, it opens to us a coal-region, at an enormous depth, which comprises more than one half of the entire area of Great Britain; hence, it may be argued that we have inexhaustible coal-mines waiting to be worked. As regards the great depth, and the theory of central heat, Mr McClean shows that they are not insurmountable difficulties. 'I am of opinion,' he says, 'that the heat which undoubtedly exists in some mines, arises not from central heat, but from superincumbent pressure and defective ventilation.' Mechanical science will invent means of driving coal air down, whatever the depth, so that misgivings need not in any way influence our conduct in the development and use of that important mineral—coal; especially as the power (which is the substitute for labour) derived from coal is so cheap that we are enabled to consume daily, for our domestic comforts, for machinery in the conversion of minerals, for other manufacturing processes, and for export, a power equal to twelve million horses, at a cost, at the mine, of not more than one penny per horse-power, working ten hours a day, and no saving in consumption of this enormous quantity of coal can be made, except by employing more expensive labour as a substitute.

Next in importance to coal comes iron-stone, of which 7,586,956 tons were dug in 1862, and converted into nearly four million tons of pig-iron. And in that same year, the value of the coal and iron, in various forms, exported amounted to nearly £25,000,000. These amounts are really amazing; and we may derive from them the fullest assurance of the satisfactory progress of our country, so long as wisdom and justice preside over her councils. We remark here in passing, that, as shewn by the Board of Trade returns, recently published, the total value of exports of British manufactured goods, in 1863, was £146,489,768; being nearly twenty millions and a half more than in 1862.

A paper by Mr W. Fairbairn, read before the Royal Society, will perhaps inspire timid railway passengers with confidence, inasmuch as it treats of wrought-iron girders, and the effects produced in them by long-continued changes of load, by vibration, and by impact or blows. The importance of this subject will be recognised by all who take note of the large use at present made of wrought-iron girders in the building of bridges. Londoners, who are promised trains to run every five minutes across the Thames, have a special interest in a question concerning the strength of their bridges. Any one who wishes for an experiment, has only to stand on Charing Cross Bridge during the passage of two or three trains, to satisfy himself that the amount of vibration is great, and to infer that it

cannot be long continued with impunity. Well, Mr Fairbairn states, as the result of his experiments, made with the utmost care, and under various circumstances, that 'wrought-iron girders of ordinary construction are not safe when submitted to violent disturbances, equivalent to one-third the weight that would break them. They, however, exhibit wonderful tenacity when subjected to the same treatment, with one-fourth the load; assuming, therefore, that an iron girder bridge will bear with this load (one-fourth) 12,000,000 changes without injury, it is clear that it would require 328 years, at the rate of 100 changes per day, before its security was affected.' But, by an increase of the load to one-third, the same bridge would be ruined in eight years only. Let engineers and railway directors look to it, and never load bridges with more than one-fourth of the breaking weight. We may then hope that before 328 years are over, posterity will have discovered some further means of safety.

Among lectures delivered at the Royal Institution, two may be cited as remarkable, namely Mr Froude's and Dr Frankland's. Mr Froude, who is widely known as an able historian, lectured on the *Science of History*, apparently to prove that there can be no such thing as a science of history, because of the impossibility of educing the laws of human motives and actions, as in physical science the laws of natural phenomena are educed by observation, and that which will be can be predicted from what has been. 'Whether the end be seventy years hence, or seven hundred,' said the lecturer in his peroration; 'be the close of the mortal history of humanity as far distant in the future as its shadowy beginnings seem now to lie behind us—this only we may foretell with confidence—that the riddle of man's nature will remain unsolved. There will be that in him yet which physical laws will fail to explain—that something, whatever it be, in himself and in the world, which science cannot fathom, and which suggests the unknown possibilities of his origin and his destiny.'

Dr Frankland's lecture was *On the Glacial Epoch*, that period in the earth's history so often referred to by geologists, when ice, in one form or another, covered so large a part of the surface. As the audience had been surprised, on a former occasion, by being told that there never had been such a thing as boiling water, so were they surprised when Dr Frankland gave forth, as the argument of his lecture, that 'the sole cause of the phenomena of the glacial epoch was a higher temperature of the ocean than that which obtains at present.' It sounds like a paradox to say, the hotter the sea, the more ice will there be on the land; but hear the new theory propounded by Dr Frankland: Nature's apparatus for producing ice on a great scale are, an evaporator, a condenser, and a receiver. An ocean at a high temperature is a grand evaporator; the dry air of the upper regions of the atmosphere into which the warm vapour ascends, is the condenser; the mountains, which were probably one-fourth higher in the glacial epoch than now, are the receivers. The evaporation from the ocean being enormous, there was a constant precipitation of condensed vapour on the mountains, where it froze and accumulated in the form of ice, crept down the sides of the mountains, and over-spread the whole of the land; and these overwhelming masses of ice it was which left their

traces on rocks, along the sides of valleys, and transported huge boulders from far-distant regions, and furnished for scientific students some of the most remarkable of geological phenomena. As the earth cooled more and more, the evaporation from the sea diminished, and in proportion as supply failed on the receivers, the ice and snow disappeared from the valleys and lowlands, and the present state of things prevailed. The cooling process is still going on, and when it has fallen to a certain amount, stupendous cracks and rents will take place in the granite which constitutes so large a portion of the shell or crust of our globe, and the pleasant and fruitful earth on which we live will become even as the moon; such, Dr Frankland says, is the fate in store for us. He believes that the moon has gone completely through her cooling, and that the ocean which once flowed over its surface has been entirely swallowed by the cracks occasioned by the cooling. The gulfs formed by the cracks he calculates as fourteen and a half million cubic miles in capacity—room enough and to spare for the unfortunate moon's ocean, supposing the quantity of water to have been the same in proportion as that on our earth. It is a melancholy prospect; but Dr Frankland says: 'If such be the present condition of the moon, we can scarcely avoid the conclusion, that a liquid ocean can only exist upon the surface of a planet so long as the latter retains a high internal temperature. The moon, then, becomes to us a prophetic picture of the ultimate fate which awaits our earth, when, deprived of an external ocean, and of all but an annual rotation upon its axis, it shall revolve round the sun an arid and lifeless wilderness—one hemisphere exposed to the perpetual glare of a cloudless sun, the other shrouded in eternal night.'

To enable our readers to apprehend Dr Frankland's argument the better, we give the leading points. 1. The effects of the glacial epoch were felt over the entire globe. 2. It (the glacial epoch) occurred at a geologically recent period. 3. It was preceded by a period of indefinite duration, in which glacial action was either altogether wanting, or was at least comparatively insignificant. 4. During its continuance, atmospheric precipitation was much greater, and the height of the snow-line considerably less than at present. 5. It was followed by a period extending to the present time, when glacial action became again insignificant.

The Russians are working in real earnest at their telegraph from St Petersburg to Pekin. The line now extends as far as Irkoutsk—a distance of 5750 versts (about 5000 miles) from St Petersburg. The first message between the two places was flashed on December 21, in eight and a half hours. The time by post would be twenty-four days. While Russia is thus active in the north and east, we are busy in the south and east; and as the vessels with the lengths of cable on board have arrived in the Persian Gulf, we may hope soon to hear that Karachi is connected with the telegraphic line already established as far as Bagdad. London will then be able to communicate with Calcutta. We believe it has not yet been perfectly ascertained at what rate signals may be transmitted through very long distances; but for short distances, Mr Wheatstone's *automatic telegraph* appears to be the most rapid yet invented. This instrument is largely used in the telegraphic communications of the metropolis; and satisfactory proof

has been obtained that between places not further apart than London and Dover, it will transmit six hundred letters in a minute, and by a single wire. This would seem to be quick enough, for there are not many persons who can read more than six hundred letters in a minute. This is so gratifying a result that every one must hope that the experiments about to be made at greater distances—hundreds of miles—will prove equally successful.

There are some persons who take a despondent view of the public health and the progress of population; fancying that the one is deteriorated by the growth of civilisation, and the other diminished by emigration. Let them be reassured by a few sanitary facts. When Mr Edwin Chadwick, about twenty years ago, raised the question of sanitary reform, and persisted in keeping it before the public until steps were taken to carry out measures for drainage, sewage, water-supply, and other essential works, he asserted that by adoption of the proposed improvements, a diminution of one-third in the number of deaths in a town or district might be confidently looked for. It seemed a bold prediction, but it has been more than verified; for in all the towns which have accepted and accomplished sanitary reform, the diminution in the number of deaths is one-half. In other words, instead of 30 deaths in every 1000 of the population, the number is now not more than 15, and in some instances even less than 15. Many of our readers will be able to identify for themselves the towns in which these satisfactory results have been obtained. There is no doubt about the matter, for it is as clearly demonstrated by comparison of a drained section of a town with the undrained part, as by town with town. Macclesfield, where the works are not yet completed, is a case in point. Hence we see that if sanitary reform were carried out over the whole kingdom, there would be a saving of one-half in the rate of mortality to be added to the usual increase of population by births, which at the next census, in 1871, would tell with striking effect in the tables of increase. With a gain so large as this, emigration need not be dreaded, nor, plague and pestilence apart, should fears be entertained as to the sanitary amelioration of the country at large. Though undrained and ill-watered towns are still numerous, there is a growing tendency towards improvement, which cannot fail to be recognised in all future records of the population of the realm.

AFFLICTION.

WHEN winter's snowy covering wraps

In sleep the hidden ground,

A tiny little flower springs up

Above the snow around—

The child of Snow and Earth, I ween,

For the head is white, and the stem is green.

So doth affliction's icy breath

Enwrap a sinful soul;

The buds of earthly care it nips,

And freezes sin's control;

When up above the whole doth rise

Love, that sweet flower of Paradise.

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